THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During 1996–97, follcwing 381 mines incurred losses:—

S. No.	Company	No. of loss making mines
1.	ECL	109
2.	BCCL	61
3.	CCL	51
4.	WCL	36
5.	SECL	27
6.	MCL	29
7.	NEC/CIL	06
8.	SCCL	62
	Total :	318

(c) to (e) The coal companies have taken a number of steps for revival of the loss making mines such as:—

i) Reorganisation of manpower.

ii) Short term schemes to augment production.

iii) Replacement of manual loading by SDL & LHD.

iv) Conversion of underground mines into opencast, wherever feasible.

v) Proper utilisation of equipment.

vi) Better maintenance, adequate back-up of spare parts and proper training to operators and maintenance personnel.

vii) Strict cost control measures.

viii) Additional resource generations through better quality control of despatches.

However, during 1996–97, 6 mines (4 in ECL and 2 in WCL) were closed down as the revival plan did not succeed because of geo-mining conditions, safety reasons and inadequate working reserves.

Ban on Import of Carpets

464. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of United States has decided to put a ban on import of carpets from India;

(b) if so, the main reasons for such a ban; and

(c) the steps taken to avert the ban?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) According to information available, an amendment has recently been enacted under US Government's Treasury, Postal Services and General Appropriation Act, 1998 which reads as follows:

> "Section 633. None of the funds made available in this Act for the United States Custom Service may be used to allow the importation into the United States of any goods, ware, article or merchandise mined, produced or manufactured by forced or indentured child labour, as determined pursuant to section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1307)"

There is a possibility that this amendment may have adverse impact on carpet exports from India.

(c) The steps being taken by the Government to counter the adverse impact of the legislation on carpet exports from the country include: examination of U.S. legislation and its implication in term of Indian Law; intensifying efforts for mobilizing support against trade restriction measures for reasons relating to labour standards in ILO; considering raising the issue formally and informally at W.T.O; taking up the issue at diplomatic level with U.S. Government; interaction with leading U.S. importers of Indian carpets; sending of delegation to U.S. by Carpet Export Promotion Council; publicity campaign; adoption of voluntary code of conduct by the carpet trade.

I.D.F.C

465. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have constituted Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation (I.D.F.C);

(b) If so, whether International Financial Corporation has agreed to invest for infrastructure development; and

(c) If so, details of the work undertaken by the IDFC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Infrastructure Development Finance Company Limited (IDFC) was incorporated as a company on January 30, 1997 to act as a specialised financial intermediatory to specifically cater to the financial requirements of the infrastructure sector in the country.